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RONCO

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RONCO Consulting Corporation is an international services firm specializing in demining and humanitarian assistance, agri-business, procurement services and private enterprise development. RONCO's involvement in demining evolves from 20 years experience with worldwide development and assistance contracts. RONCO has been operational in Mozambique, Afghanistan, Thailand, Nicaragua, Honduras, Costa Rica, Cuba, Angola, Rwanda, Bosnia and Croatia. RONCO is the only firm in the U.S. that has developed and is successfully using "free running" dogs for mine detection.

RONCO's approach to demining is a two-tiered approach. RONCO's dog teams are first used to locate mines. Mines are then lifted or destroyed in place by deminers. This has proven, for RONCO, to be a highly successful, accurate, safe and cost effective method. Indigenous capacity building is the next link to RONCO's demining approach. When RONCO leaves an area, they leave behind a fully equipped indigenous team of dog handlers and deminers to carry on demining efforts. Demining can then continue in a timely manner and the host country can operate with limited foreign assistance.



Dog handler and German Shepherd working on mined area.

Photo c/o Ronco

Since August 1996, RONCO has implemented demining projects in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia under the U.S. Department of State and World Bank Funding. Over 15,440 square miles of land has been cleared by RONCO. They also won four contracts from the International Trust Fund for Demining and from the Assistance of Mine Victims in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At completion of the contracts, an estimated 308 additional miles of land will be cleared by RONCO and its partners. On June 11, 1999, Ronco signed a four-month contract with the State Department to provide six demining teams and a management team to the U.S demining efforts in Kosovo. Consisting of two mine detecting dogs, deminers, medics and support personnel, each team will perform mapping, identifying, recording, marking and destroying mines and UXO.

In October 1999, RONCO was awarded \$250 million demining contract from the Department of State. The contract calls for RONCO to provide mine clearance, mine-detection support logistics and supply service to countries receiving U.S. humanitarian demining assistance. The State Department contract is an indefinite quality contract. Over the next five years RONCO will be given tasks to

complete by the State Department.

The State Department will be the contract administrator for the specifics of this contract and will make its decisions in contract direction through an interagency working group, which will involve relevant government agencies. The following companies/NGO's were involved with RONCO's bid for the contract and may be called upon to provide additional support:

- Global Training Academy dogs
- MECHEM-machinery and equipment
- FGM info management and software
- RPI planning and assessment
- SAIC research
- Star Mountain training
- Marshall Legacy Institute global studies and conferences

RONCO recently began work in Thailand as part of the Integrated Mine Action Support Task Order, which is a part of this contract. In November 1999, a four-person team traveled to Thailand for an assessment. A two-phase performance plan was created. In Phase I, RONCO will place a four-person team for a six-week survey period. The team's responsibilities will include determining the availability of specially trained dogs and handlers and reviewing requirements, information sources and site visits in coordination with the U.S. Embassy, the Thailand Mine Action Center and the Thai military. In Phase II, RONCO will develop the Thailand Mine Detecting Dog Center with the goal of The Center being operational by September 2000.

A current task order of the State Department contract requires that RONCO provide six mine detecting dogs and integrate them into the Mozambican Accelerated Demining Program (ADP). This will be carried out through personnel training, development of management systems, and provision of equipment, supplies and facilities to sustain the Mine Detection Dog Program.



Phase I of this program was completed in December 1999. At that time RONCO carried out site visits, purchased and trained dogs, determined the availability of handlers and integrated ADP demining teams to work in mine fields. Refresher training for dog handlers will also be provided with completion of tasks scheduled by August 2000.

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